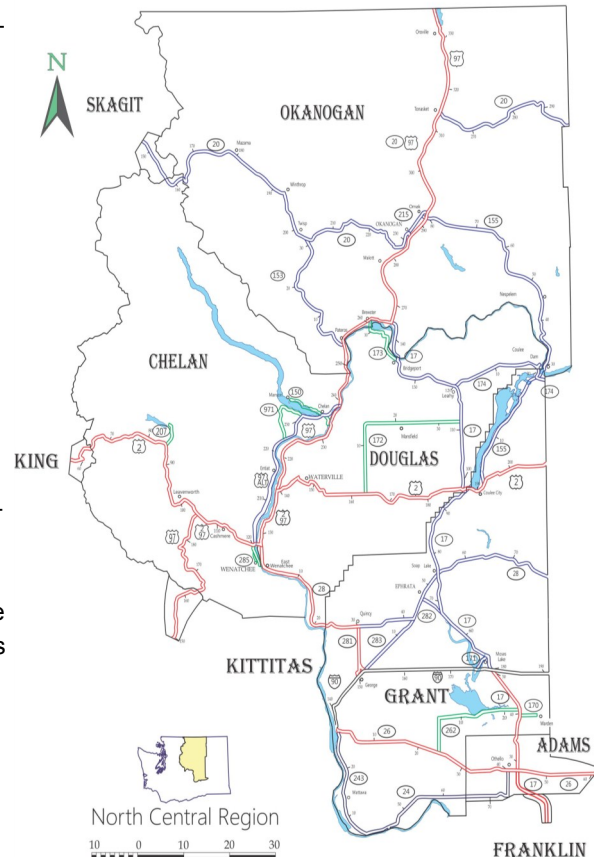


North Central Region Summary and Facts Sheet

The WSDOT North Central Region, regional headquarters is in Wenatchee. The region includes more than 13,493 square miles in Chelan, Douglas, Grant and Okanogan counties, and parts of Adams, Franklin, King, Kittitas and Skagit counties. It includes significant portions of the 4th and 8th Congressional Districts, all of the 12th Legislative District, much of the 7th and 13th and a part of the 9th and 39th Districts.

The region's state highway infrastructure includes 2,637 lane miles, one tunnel, 175 bridges, and seven mountain passes. Approximately 1,123 lane miles are paved with hot mix asphalt (HMA) and the remaining 1,514 lane miles consist of bituminous surface treatments (BST) / chip seals.

The region serves 38 cities and towns. In 2011 the population was approximately 258,645, or just less than 4% of the state's total. The three largest cities are Wenatchee (32,400), Moses Lake (20,950), and East Wenatchee (13,280). There are three other communities with populations over 5,000.



North Central Region staff is comprised of 256 permanent, and depending on how severe winter weather is up to 80 temporary and 13 seasonal individuals. Staff supports and serves the local communities in numerous ways to sustain a vibrant economy enabling growth and development in the region, while preserving and maintaining the transportation infrastructure.

Region maintenance activities are managed within three Areas. They are headquartered in Wenatchee, Ephrata and Okanogan, with seventeen section sheds distributed to most efficiently provide services such as snow and ice control. Region engineering and support services are located in Wenatchee.

➤ Economic Drivers

Agricultural industry is the backbone of the local economy. Industrial growth, growing retirement communities and tourism also are important economic generators dependent on the transportation system for viability. The tree fruit, grape vineyards, grain, haying yards and vegetable production industries are supported by extensive agricultural services, food processing plants, trucking and warehouse facilities. Forestry and mining are experiencing an overall decline, but several wood product manufacturing companies are operating.

Mining of gold and other minerals continues to be a significant resource in Okanogan County. A new seed extraction industry is developing with the opening of a new plant in Warden. The expanding need to access medical facilities in Wenatchee is straining transportation services that support the aging population located not only in the community hubs, but in remote areas of the region.

Economic Drivers Continued:

Wenatchee area sports facilities are growing exponentially with semi-professional teams in baseball, football, and hockey along with major statewide and regional soccer, baseball, softball, and fishing tournaments. For the 23rd year Wenatchee hosted the State Winter Special Olympics.

Tourism in the region continues to expand. Two destination ski areas; hundreds of campgrounds, lakes, rivers and fishing and hunting areas; plus developments at Lake Chelan, Grand Coulee Dam, themed "Bavarian" Leavenworth and "Old West" Winthrop, draw hundreds of thousands of visitors annually. A relatively new attraction resulting from growth in the wine industry is agricultural tourism which can present unique infrastructure access challenges. The area has long been known as a producer of quality apples and pears.

While primary industries such as ALCOA in Wenatchee continue to provide high wage jobs, new high tech companies, including Microsoft, Yahoo, and Intuit, are bringing jobs and are investing millions of dollars locating in the area due to low power rates, land availability and quality of life.

North Central Region Demographics

County Population

Adams (Othello Vicinity)	14,120
Chelan	73,200
Douglas	38,900
Grant	91,000
Okanogan	41,525
Total	258,645

There are seven major hydroelectric dams on the Columbia River in the region, as well as several others on smaller rivers. The state highway system plays a key role in the maintenance, support and security of these critically important power producing facilities. Much of the land irrigated by the Columbia Basin Irrigation Project lies within the region; Grand Coulee Dam and the Columbia Basin Projects irrigate 670,000 acres producing \$1.87 billion in irrigated crops, power generated and recreation income.

As a result of the Wenatchee Valley's attractive cost of living, clean environment, shorter commute times, good schools, low crime rate, first class medical facilities, year round tourism activities, 300 days of sunshine, plus the proximity to the Puget Sound metropolitan areas, it is consistently included on lists of the best places in the United States to retire. These same attributes attract medical and other professionals to work in the region.

➤ Transportation Services Provided to the Communities

Major state highways in the region include I-90, US 2, US 97, SR 26, SR 17, SR 28 and SR 20.

Pangborn Field is the primary regional airport serving Wenatchee. The region is also served by 21 other airports. The largest is the Grant County International Airport in Moses Lake which supports various industrial and commercial activities. The facility, formerly Larson Air Force Base, has one of the longest runways west of the Mississippi.

Passenger rail is provided by Amtrak with daily stops in Wenatchee, Ephrata, and Leavenworth. Burlington Northern/Santa Fe Railroad provides mainline freight rail services in the region. Several significant branch lines operate as well. The Cascade and Columbia River Railroad operates from Wenatchee north to Oroville, near the Canadian border, and was a factor in development of the heavy haul corridor for Canadian products to Oroville.

The Port of Quincy operates a truck/train container trans-load facility and the Port of Moses Lake continues development of its industrial rail use center.

Transportation Services Provided to the Communities Continued:

LINK Transit provides bus service in the Wenatchee metropolitan area with routes to Leavenworth, Chelan, Cashmere, Rock Island, Waterville and other smaller communities in Chelan and Douglas Counties. Grant Transit Authority operates daily routes from Grand Coulee to Othello. Several other smaller community organizations operate busses to meet various elements required as part of the regional "Human Services Plans".

US 97, running through the heart of the region, is a recognized NAFTA corridor. This primarily two-lane roadway carries a significant volume of freight in addition to tourist and local traffic. The US 97 international border crossing at Oroville / Osoyoos is the busiest crossing on the east side of the Cascades and the fourth busiest in the State. The crossing has the largest personal vehicle count of the crossings between the Cascades and the Interstate 29 crossing on the ND/MN border, an indication of its importance to tourism. It is also the largest south bound freight crossing east of the Cascades until one reaches the crossing at US 95 in Idaho.

Seven Mountain Passes		
HWY	MTN. PASS	ELEVATION
2	Stevens Pass	4061
20	Rainy Pass	4855
20	Washington Pass	5477
20	Loup Loup Summit	4020
20	Wauconda Summit	4310
155	Disautel Summit	3252
97	Blewett Pass	4102

➤ Transportation Partners and Stakeholders

The local Wenatchee metropolitan planning organization is known as the Wenatchee Valley Transportation Council (WVTC) and is responsible for transportation planning in the greater Wenatchee urban area. The WVTC is governed by an executive council with membership representing two counties, three cities, and two port districts. Also represented are LINK Transit and the WSDOT's North Central Region.

The North Central Region also partners with two regional transportation planning organizations: North Central RTPO and Quad County RTPO. The North Central Regional Transportation Planning Organization coordinates transportation planning in the non-metropolitan areas of Chelan, Douglas and Okanogan counties. The Quad County Regional Transportation Planning Organization coordinates transportation planning in Grant, Adams, Lincoln, and Kittitas counties.

A grassroots Moses Lake area transportation coalition was formed in 2006, called TransCo. It's primary focus has been advocating for specific rail and highway projects in the Columbia Basin. Several scenic byway coalitions are aggressively promoting trade and tourism along the Coulee Corridor (SR 17 and SR 155), the Steven Pass Greenway (US 2), the Cascade Loop (US 2, US 97, SR 20, and SR 153), and the Okanogan Trails (US 97) byway.

The North Central Region is also participating with several active economic development organizations including the North Central Economic Development District, and the Big Bend Resource Conservation and Development Council. The Region provides management, staff support, and/or other technical assistance to these partners and stakeholder organizations as well as the cities, towns and counties in the Region. The smaller communities rarely have engineering staff, and therefore use North Central Region as a resource for transportation engineering and planning questions.

➤ Community Outreach Efforts

North Central Region provides transportation coordination and traffic operation assistance to the cities and counties in north central Washington. For example, the region has agreements to operate and maintain traffic signal systems for smaller communities that lack the expertise to operate these systems. The region also produces and provides weekly information to communicate traffic impacts and progress of region construction projects and maintenance activities, with public outreach increasing to several times daily during winter snow and ice events. Close and continual communication is maintained with local legislators, elected city and county officials, and the Colville, Yakama, and Wanapum tribes. "List serve" distribution lists have proven to be an effective tool to keep rural communities aware of activities. These "list serves" are beneficial for all construction and maintenance activities, and have been particularly appreciated as crews prepare and start opening the North Cascades highway after a long winter closure.



➤ Future Transportation Needs and Plans

Wenatchee Urban area mobility needs are addressed in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan produced by the Wenatchee Valley Transportation Council. The council recognizes that expansion and management of the transportation infrastructure will be needed to accommodate continuing growth.

Outside the urban areas, the needs for safety, preservation, all weather road surfaces and capacity improvements on agricultural freight routes will continue to grow. Tourist traffic and both local "farm to market" and "through-bound" freight transport needs must be addressed. Solutions include engineering / infrastructure improvement projects such as new passing lanes and aggressive summer and winter maintenance programs, as well as Intelligent Transportation System operational improvements including more weather stations, traffic cameras and motorist information.

Preservation and improvement of roadway pavements, short line rail systems, and non-motorized transportation systems involving bicycle and pedestrian facilities, transit, park and ride (pool) locations also are a regional priority. Many communities lack sidewalks on streets leading to schools making the "safe route to schools" and "complete streets" programs very important.

Maintenance and preservation of the transportation system including roadway, bridges, ITS, rest areas and other facilities is critical to preserve the system investment. There has been an increasing backlog of maintenance work based on increasing inventory and funding constraints.

➤ Region Accomplishments:

1. Stabilized a dozen unstable slopes over the past five years to reduce rockfall onto roadways.
2. Preserved hundreds of miles of pavement biennially through chip seals (BSTs) and hot mix asphalt (HMA) rehabilitation.
3. Constructed numerous intersection safety improvements, including the first roundabout in the region, to increase corridor safety throughout the region.
4. Supported the major NoaNet fiber installation across North Central Washington on SR 20 from US 97 in Tonasket to Tiger in Eastern Region.
5. In conjunction with the Stevens Pass Ski Resort and the USFS, funded and constructed a pedestrian bridge at the summit of Stevens Pass removing conflicts between pedestrians and highway traffic and provided electronic signing to inform travelers, skiers, mountain bike terrain park users, of highway conditions.
6. Improved pedestrian and bicycle access to the Greater Wenatchee Area trail system (Apple Capital Loop Trail) during construction of several highway improvement projects. Completing transfer of land leased to Douglas County and the City of East Wenatchee for Apple Capital Loop Trail along the eastern bank of the Columbia River.
7. In the process of completing three major construction projects connecting the City of East Wenatchee and Wenatchee on SR 285 & SR 28 improving mobility and safety for commuters, trucks, and visitors to the Wenatchee Area.
8. Provided several passing lanes throughout the Region supporting passing opportunities relieving conflicts.
9. Worked with Chelan County Natural Resources, the Yakama Nation, Okanogan County Conservation, WA Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Colville Confederated Tribes in numerous locations providing additional habitat for salmon, bull trout, and steelhead spawning.
10. Installed 44 public (and 20 Pan Tilt Zoom WSDOT only) traffic cameras for public information services as well as traffic and maintenance management.
11. Supported and utilized “soft region boundaries,” working with the other regions to deliver critical construction and maintenance programs by sharing workforce and equipment.
12. Adjusted Region Construction Program organizational structure to match with program needs.
13. Consolidated Region Safety, Human Resources, Accounting, and Real Estate staff with Eastern Region, South Central Region, and HQ for efficiency, effectiveness, and consistency.
14. Maintained constant and consistent information sharing with staff regarding budget forecasts and potential impacts.
15. Minimized daytime closures and improved public communications/notifications on mountain passes by utilizing effective management tools and ITS systems.
16. Tumwater Bridge Replacement and 97A Wildlife Fence are significant collaborative projects the region has undertaken to further bolster our environmental ethic. The region has a strong record in efficiently delivering fish passage projects.
17. Coordinated with Washington State Patrol and local agencies on operational and safety issues.
18. Supported the smaller communities which rarely have engineering staff.

➤ Future Needs

- Stable funding and programs for efficient and effective organizational structure. This will allow “right sizing” of staff levels with the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities.
- Funding to insure preservation of low volume rural farm to market routes necessary for economic stability.
- Funding to properly maintain and operate transportation infrastructure.
- Continue to develop strategies and funding to meet “Target Zero” safety goals on all region transportation facilities.
- Continue to build strong relations and coalitions with civic and local agencies for unified transportation system needs and visions.
- Incremental strategies to improve mobility and safety on major routes including, US 2 from Stevens pass to Wenatchee, SR 28 from Wenatchee to Quincy and SR 281 from Quincy to I-90, US 97 from the southern region boundary at Lauderdale Junction to the Canadian Border, and SR 17 from the junction of US 395 to Ephrata.
- Relocation/consolidation of region administrative office and staff to the Euclid Avenue Complex for improved efficiency and to allow the existing site to be sold and redeveloped to match the community’s vision.
- Consolidation of the Leavenworth and Blewett Maintenance Sheds to another location for efficiency and to relocate out of downtown Leavenworth for their economic visions and vitality.

State Owned Highways Maintained and Operated

Roadway	Centerline Miles
Rural Principle Arterial	422
Rural Minor Arterial	473
Rural Collector	140
Rural Interstate	49
Urban Principle Arterial	48
Urban Minor Arterial	4
Urban Collector	0
Urban Interstate	5
Total	1,141

Roadway Safety

County	State Route Collisions	Fatalities
Chelan	558	6
Douglas	236	2
Grant	548	5
Okanogan	265	5
Total	1607	18

*Collisions and Fatalities on State Routes by Count
(Source: 2011 Washington State Highway Annual Collision Data Summary)*

Staffing

FTE Staffing	Biennium To Date:
Region Administration	3.0
Construction Program	74.5
Maintenance	178.2
Administrative Services	9.5
Local Programs	2.0
Region Program Management	6.0
Total	273.2

(Source: WSDOT Monthly FTE Report—January 2013)